

COPLANAR WAVEGUIDE FED PHASED ARRAY ANTENNA

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ABSTRACT

A K-band four element linear phased array has been designed and tested. Coplanar waveguide (CPW) is used for the microwave distribution system. A CPW to twin strip transition is used to interface with the printed dipole antennas. MMIC phased shifters are used for phase control.

INTRODUCTION

Coplanar waveguide (CPW) is a transmission line which consists of a center strip and a semi-infinite ground plane on either side of it [1]. CPW is useful for integrating MMIC's together to form a microwave distribution network since the ground planes are readily accessible on the top side of the substrate. Grounded CPW (GCPW) is a variant of CPW which incorporates an additional ground plane on the back side of the substrate [2]. This additional ground plane can serve as a heat sink and provide mechanical strength. In addition, this ground plane serves as a shield between stacked antennas boards to improve isolation.

Several CPW fed antennas have been reported in the literature. A GCPW fed coplanar stripline antenna constructed by widening the center strip of the GCPW to form a rectangular patch has been reported [3]. This antenna produces a linearly-polarized pattern normal to the plane of the substrate. Coplanar waveguide fed slot antennas which are the complement to printed dipole antennas have also been reported [4]. This antenna also radiates in a direction normal to the plane of the substrate. Although end-fire antennas are required for many large phased arrays, no CPW fed end-fire antennas have been reported yet in the literature.

In this paper we demonstrate a K-Band four element, printed dipole linear array which uses GCPW for the feed network and the integration of the MMIC phase shifters. This array radiates in the end fire direction and is suitable for large two dimensional arrays.

CIRCUIT DESCRIPTION

The microwave distribution network and antennas is shown in Figure 1. The microwave distribution network is fed by a single coaxial transmission line. The microwave signal is then split equally onto four GCPW transmission lines by three GCPW T-junctions. Wire bonds were used to tie the ground planes of the GCPW at the bends and T-junctions. The insertion loss for the one-to-four power divider is shown in Figure 2. The MMIC phase shifters are DC isolated from the rest of the network by a pair of GCPW couplers. The couplers have been optimized to have a passband at the antenna operating frequency. The GCPW was tapered to provide a better match to the line width of the microstrip lines on the MMIC. The insertion loss for the two couplers with a GaAs 50 Ω microstrip through connection in place of the phase shifters was 2.0 dB. The transition from the unbalanced GCPW to the balanced coplanar strip transmission line was made through a coplanar balun [5]. The circuit was fabricated on 0.0625 inch thick CuFlon material.

The phase shifters shown in Figure 3a were developed by Hughes Aircraft Corp. under contract to NASA [6]. The phase shifters are reflection type and utilize a Lange coupler and two reverse biased varactor diodes to provide continuous 180 degree phase shift. The phase shifters were characterized individually before integration with the antenna network. By applying bias voltages from 0 to 4 V, 170 degree of phase shift was obtained as shown in Figure 3b with an average insertion loss of 6.15 dB. Amplitude control can be added by the addition of MMIC amplifiers, variable attenuators, or switches.

ARRAY PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS

The measured radiation pattern for a single GCPW fed printed dipole antenna is shown in Figure 4a. As expected, the pattern is broad due to the low gain of the antenna. The measured radiation pattern for the four element linear array is shown in Figure 4b. The pattern was measured with identical GaAs 50 Ω microstrip through lines in place of the phase shifters. The E-plane and H-plane patterns have 3-dB beam widths of 15 and 40 degrees respectively. The E-plane pattern has a shift in the main lobe which is probably due to path length differences in the feed network. The radiation pattern of the array with the MMIC phase shifters is in the process of being made.

CONCLUSIONS

A K-Band four element linear array of printed dipole antennas which demonstrates the advantages of CPW for MMIC integration and microwave signal distribution has been fabricated and tested. The radiation characteristics for the antenna is excellent.

REFERENCES

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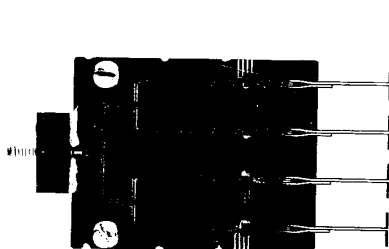


Fig.1 GCPW fed four element printed dipole phased array.

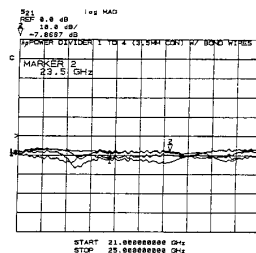


Fig.2 GCPW one-to-four power divider amplitude characteristics.

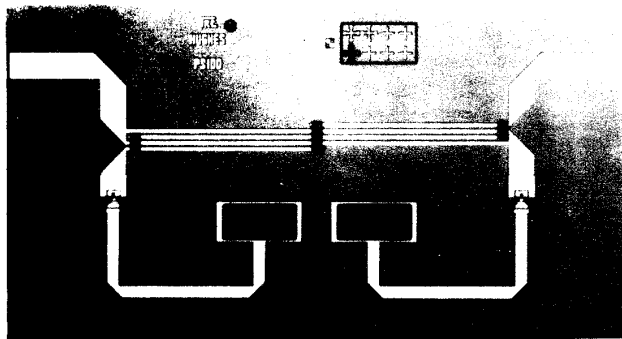


Fig.3(a) GaAs MMIC Phase Shifter.

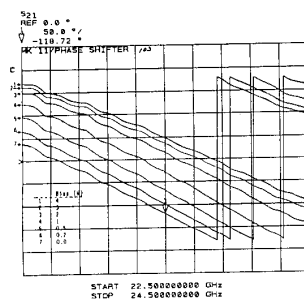


Fig.3(b) Measured Phase Characteristics of a typical GaAs MMIC phase shifter.

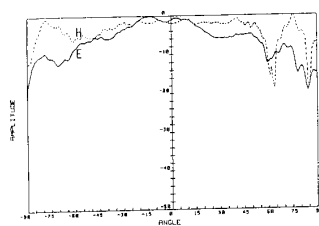


Fig.4(a) Typical Measured E- and H-Plane Radiation Pattern of a Single Radiator.

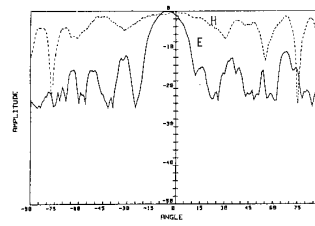


Fig.4(b) Measured E- and H-Plane Radiation Pattern of the Four Element Printed Dipole Array at 21.3 GHz.